Holi festival in India

1. Read the text.

X

Arrive in white, leave looking like a parrot! Holi festivals have become quite popular in the West too. There is probably one somewhere in a city near you. But for those of you who plan a visit to India and would like to experience the original Holi, here's some useful information.

Holi is a festival of colours. It is celebrated all over India every March, on the day after the full moon, as a reminder that spring is about to begin. Holi is a festival for everyone; women, children and men from all parts of society come together during the day. Usually the big party takes place before noon; the afternoon is spent trying to get clean again, and in the evenings families and friends meet up. If you are looking for the traditional version of Holi, Mathura has the biggest celebrations. You'll also be able to find big parties in the major cities, such as Mumbai.

The main idea is to celebrate the victory of good over evil by burning the demoness Holika. Still, the focus is more on fun and happiness than on religious rituals. Holi is mostly about having a good time and partying. People sing and dance around fires, listen to music, and throw coloured water at each other or smear powder on other people's faces.

So it goes without saying that you will get dirty. Some colours are difficult to wash out, so don't wear your Sunday best, but old clothes that you won't miss in case you have to throw them away afterwards. You will want to put some oil or lotion on your skin too. That way the colours can't get too deep into your skin to wash off. Also protect your eyes and mouth as well as you can.

Unfortunately, during the festival there have been threatening situations for visitors, especially women and girls. Often it's young guys who have used a cannabis paste called *bhang* or have drunk too much who behave disrespectfully. To stay safe, visit the festival early in the morning and leave before noon, in order to avoid possibly aggressive people. Do not go alone, but stay with a group of people that you know and trust. Also, many hotels offer Holi parties in an environment that is safe for everyone.

VisitIndia – 2019

2. What do you remember? Don´t look at the text but use the photos to talk to your partner about Holi.

3. Various colour festivals have become popular around the world. Do you know other events where colours play an important role? Describe them.

4. Have you ever taken part in a Holi festival or a similar event? Would you like to go? Why (not)?

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